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FLASHBACK

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FLASHBACK

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SCHOOL DISTRICTS OF WASHINGTON COUNTY

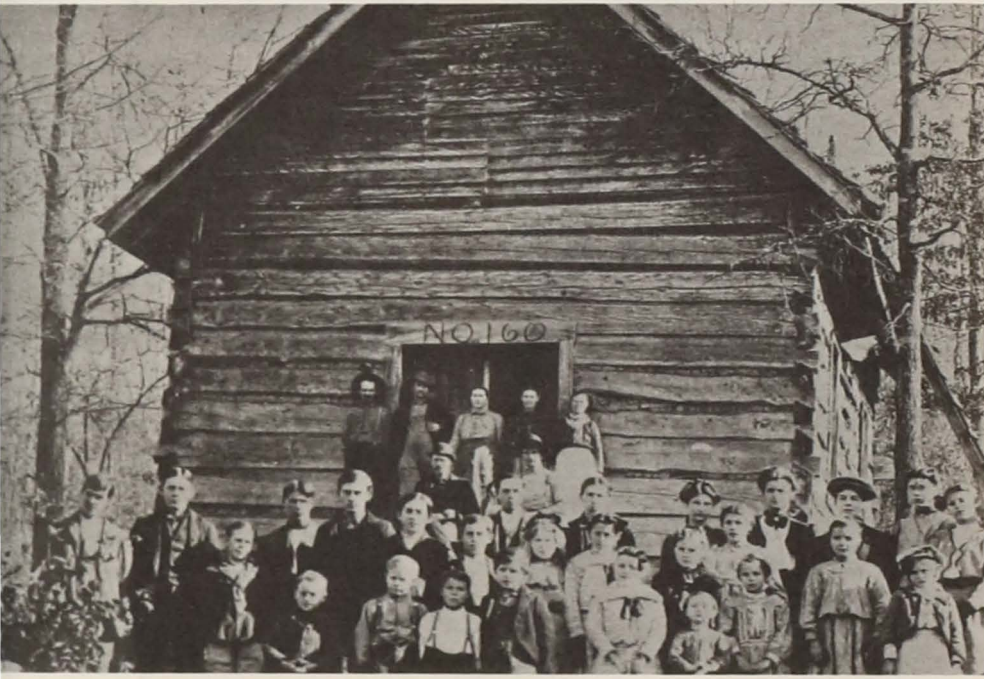
by Lois Lawson Morris
Assisted by Virginia Harriman

Washington County formally created one hundred and twenty-nine school districts during January of 1884. This was not the first attempt to provide elementary or higher education in the County, but was the beginning of free public education administered through organized districts as we know them today.

Following the Civil War, Arkansas attempted to achieve a broad system of free public education, but was thwarted by the excesses of reconstruction and a lack of funds for educational purposes. It was not until the resourceful and far-sighted W.E. Thompson[1] became Superintendent of Public Instruction that Washington County could implement the state's plan for a system of common schools.

The names and numbers of districts, along with dates of their creation, are given on the following pages. The reader is warned, however, that confusion will arise with dates and names for some

District No. 160 schoolhouse, 1896. (WCHS photo collection).



districts. For example, District Number Seven, contiguous with Woolsey and West Fork, on petition was dissolved and added to West Fork in 1894. The district number, Seven, was later assigned to a north eastern district known as Jay Bird. The latter is remembered, not the district "Seven" that merged with West Fork in 1894. Another puzzle develops at the point when Fall Creek, District Sixty-three, and Wickwire, District Eighty-seven, dissolved and reformed as Strickler, a single district taking the number Sixty-three formerly held by Fall Creek.

1. Fayetteville 1884
2. Mt. Zion 1884
3. Woolsey 1884
4. Son's Chapel 1884
5. (Name unknown) 1884
6. Farmington 1884
7. (Name unknown) 1884
   Jay Bird bet.1894/1920
8. White Rock 1884
9. Braden 1884
10. Elkins 1884
11. Zion 1884
12. Rieff's Chapel 1884
13. Oak Grove 1884
14. Flat Rock 1884
15. New Hope 1884
16. Round Mt. 1884
17. Evergreen 1884
18. (Name unknown) 1884
19. Summers 1884
20. Campbell 1884
21. Monitor 1884
22. Viney Grove 1884
23. Prairie Grove 1884
24. Pilgrim Rest 1884
25. Baldwin 1884
26. Habberton 1884
27. Illinois Chapel 1884
28. Walnut Grove 1884
29. Winslow 1884
30. Mount Olive 1884
31. Shady Grove 1884
32. Vineyard 1884
33. Evansville 1884
34. Mt. Comfort 1884
35. Big Springs 1884
36. Shady Grove 1884
37. Brentwood 1884
38. Hubbard 1884
39. Fly Creek 1884
40. Strain 1884
41. Black Oak 1884
42. Appleby 1884
43. (Name unknown) 1884
44. Howe 1884
45. White House 1884
46. Black Oak 1884
47. Beaty 1884
48. Lincoln 1884
49. Morrow 1884
50. Springdale 1884
51. Stonewall 1884
52. Burkshed 1884
53. Harris 1884
54. Garrett Hollow 1884
55. Bethesda 1884
56. Glendale (White Oak) 1884
57. Cane Hill 1884
58. Cincinnati 1884
59. Combs Chapel 1884
60. Rock Springs 1884
61. Savoy 1884
62. Prairie View 1884
63. Fall Creek 1884
    Strickler 1947
64. Round Mt. 1884
65. Sonora 1884
66. White Oak 1884

Turn-of-the-century steel alloy school bell and frame. (Sears, Roebuck & Co.)

67.	Richland View	1884
68.	Fishback	1884
69.	Shady Grove (Odell)	1884
70.	(Name unknown)	1884
71.	New Zion	1884
72.	Stony Point	1884
73.	Thomas	1884
74.	Tontitown	1884
75.	Harmon	1884
76.	Sawyers	1884
77.	Eureka	1884
78.	Mt. View	1884
79.	(Name unknown)	1884
80.	Wedington	1884
81.	Renic	1884
82.	Colony	1884
83.	Apple Hill	1884
84.	Salem	1884
85.	Hazel Valley	1884
86.	Liberty	1884
87.	Wickwire	1884
88.	Zinnamon	1884
89.	Fairview	1884
90.	Mineral Springs	1884
91.	Dripping Springs	1884
92.	Union Star	1884
93.	Mountain Top	1885
94.	Longview	1885
95.	Greenland	1884
96.	Sulphur City	1884
97.	Bethlehem	1885
98.	Meadow Valley	1885
99.	Manilla	1897
100.	Sycamore	1884
101.	Wyman	1884
102.	Bethel Grove	1884
103.	Woodland (Holloway)	1898
104.	(Name unknown)	1884
105.	(Name unknown)	1884
106.	Durham	1884
107.	Mayfield	1884
108.	Goshen	1884
109.	Johnson	1884
110.	Elm Springs	1884
111.	(Name unknown)	1884
112.	Brush Creek	1884
113.	Blackburn	1884
114.	Sugar Hill	1884
115.	Highland	1884
116.	Skylight	1884
117.	Mt. Home	1884
118.	Cove Creek	1884
119.	Sunset	1884
120.	Spring Valley	1884
121.	Temple Hill	1884
122.	Clifty	1884
123.	Mountain View	1884
124.	Salem Springs	1884
125.	White Church	1884
126.	White House	1884
127.	Belview	1884
128.	Pleasant View	1884
129.	Oak Grove	1884
130.	Buckner	1884
131.	Center Point	1884
132.	Antioch	1884
133.	(Name unknown)	1884
134.	Sassafras Pond	1884
135.	Crossroads	1884
136.	Hickory Flat	1885
137.	(Name unknown)	1885
138.	(Name unknown)	1885
139.	McDaniel	1885

140. (Name unknown)	1885	155. Pleasant Hill	1887
141. West Fork	1885	156. (Name unknown)	1887
142. (Name unknown)	1885	157. (Name unknown)	1887
143. Rhea (Amity)	1886	158. Pleasant Shade	1887
144. Mountain Gap	1886	159. Sugar Mt.	1888
145. White	1886	160. Miller's Chapel	1888
146. Gem	1886	161. (Name unknown)	1888
147. Trace Valley	1886	162. New Hope	1888
148. Corner	1886	163. Dutch Mills	1888
149. (Name unknown)	1887	164. New Sulphur	1888
150. Sycamore	1887	165. Mt. Union	1889
151. Cemetery Hill	1887	166. Walnut Corner	1910
152. Union Point	1887	167. Signal	1911
153. Valley Grove	1887	168. Peaceful Valley	1913
154. (Name unknown)	1887	169. Hale (Mulberry)	1927

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FOOTNOTES

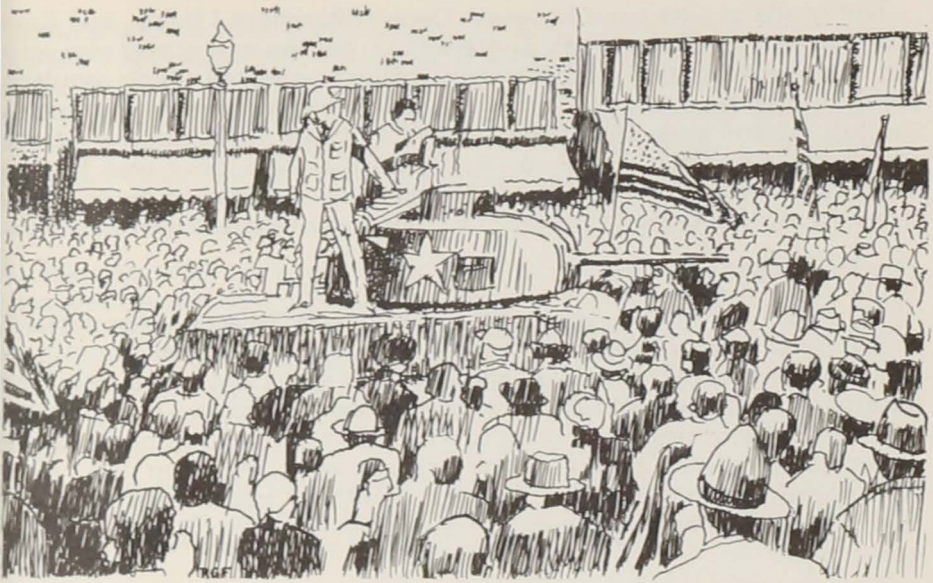
1. W.E. Thompson served as Washington County Superintendent of Public Instruction from 1882-1890.

(Editor's note: A similar listing of Washington County's old school districts appeared in Lloyd McConnell's November, 1975 *Flashback* article. The above listing was published because it includes district organization dates not included in the 1975 article. — RGF)

NOTE TO MEMBERS

• If you have moved or plan to move in the near future, please send us your new address immediately. *Flashback* is mailed under the terms of a bulk permit and is not forwarded by the Post Office.

• We have run out of the February 1981 issue of *Flashback* and need to acquire additional copies. We would appreciate your returning that issue if you don't plan to save it.



During World War II a military tank was once again the center of interest during War Bond drive activities on the Fayetteville square.

AND THE BAND PLAYED ON

by Conrow R. Miller

While I dined at the elegantly appointed Old Post Office, now a restaurant in the downtown square at Fayetteville, my mind turned to an event of my childhood.

World War I was still in progress and the government was raising money to finance it by selling what they called "Liberty" bonds. among the devices used was to have some of the machines of war brought to exhibit to the populace. At the same time there would be an entertainment with famous people or groups presenting this. Of course, there was always oratory either by local or imported speakers. The affair usually ended by a stirring appeal to buy bonds.

John Phillip Sousa's Band

So it was quite a privilege to ride in an open air truck to see a real tank and to hear a concert by the celebrated band of John Phillip Sousa. Sousa and his band had been taken en masse into the Navy and were being used to promote the sale of bonds while they toured the country.

The roads at this time between Cane Hill, where I lived, and Fayetteville were far from ideal. There was no paving and gravel was very thin if there was any at all. Tires were often punctured,which required patching on the spot. The wooden truck body had nothing to break the jolting and swaying of the vehicle as it rambled along over the rough terrain. So, the crowd sitting on the bare floor was jostled endlessly as we slowly progressed northward. The passengers ranged from young teenagers to men of perhaps mid-forties or even fifties.

The Roar of the Crowd

When we were finally in the county seat and the truck was parked, all scrambled out to rush to the square. As we approached, there was the roar of a great crowd. It appeared as if the entire county had assembled to celebrate! The tank was awesome in its size. Youngsters scrambled all over it. The sun was broiling hot and the press of humanity increased by the moment. At long last, after rumors had been circulated that the band had not arrived, they actually made their appearance in natty Navy attire with Mr. Sousa in command.

I don't remember anything they played, but I do recall that I thought it was wonderful and that they were impressive. We stayed until the very end of it all, which was sometime around sunset. It was a very weary small fourteen year old who sat amidst the motley crowd that composed the masculine mass in the truck.

Drenched at Prairie Grove

By the time we had reached Farmington there was an ominous cloud cover rapidly enveloping the entire sky and as we inched along toward Prairie Grove, distant thunder and lightning were increasingly evident. As we approached the old battlefield in Prairie Grove the first drops fell only to shortly develop into a downpour. Tom Allen, the driver was urged to turn on all his speed and to find immediate shelter. We were pretty well drenched when we finally took refuge under a shed across the street from the old electric light plant which supplied the power for Prairie Grove.

As the deluge continued, some of the older men would predict that the rain would shortly let up and that we might proceed. Their forecasts were as inaccurate as many of the scientific ones are today.

The night dragged on.The motor at the light plant ceased its pulsations which were a comforting sound and the practical jokers stymied all efforts to doze. At long last when dawn was touching the sky with rosy fingers, we rattled out of our haven and continued to Cane Hill mountain, always a hazard in wet weather. The clay surface of the road was as slick as glass and defied any ascent. After several futile

attempts to negotiate this rise, we tumbled out and put our shoulders to the wheel. Using all the power the engine could generate, plus our muscle power we inched to the summit. The last lap of the trip was made in silence and it was a bleary-eyed bunch who alighted in front of the Allen Store and who paid the dollar we were charged for the transportation we had been provided.

A Short Nap Before School

My dad was already in the drug store as was my mother, who assisted in the operation of it. When I had dragged my heavy feet across the street to it, I was told to go on home and rest a bit before I went to school. I had hardly touched the bed before I was sound asleep. When I wakened after what I had thought was a short nap and had cranked the phone to call my parents, they told me that it was four in the afternoon and that I'd slept through most of the day!

Looking back on the experience I wonder if the physical discomfort was worth what I gained. I am sure it was, as I had actually seen a real tank and had heard the famous Sousa band, even if it did cost a dollar!

Fayetteville Memorial Day parade, 1904. S. side of the square. (WCHS photo collection)

SOLVING THE LAUNDRY PROBLEM

by Bonita Musgrave

The laundry problem in the early days of the county must have been a greater task than it is today (1929). As a rule, there were larger families than exist today. Heavy linsey dresses and petticoats containing many yards of cloth, heavy jeans pants and cotton-checks, or plain-colored work shirts, as well as the bed-clothes and knitted wear, had to be laundered. Even the lighter weight garments of underwear were much harder to wash than our sheer, soft fabrics used today. The laundering was all done in the home since there were no commercial launderies as we know them in these days.

The Battling Stick

In talking to Mrs. Matt Howard[1] about the laundering in the early homes, the following story was related:

"It's no wonder the men's shirts didn't last long. They were made from unbleached homespun and we just naturally had to beat them all to pieces to get them clean. We had no way to get clothes clean only to rub them on our hands or to beat them with a "battling stick", which was a large, heavy, wooden paddle with which soiled clothing was pounded to remove the dirt. We would soap and soak the clothes and then put the really dirty ones out on the wash block and just naturally give them a pounding."

This story was supplemented by an interesting little incident related by Miss Lide Phillips of Springdale, Arkansas, a pioneer resident, who relates an experience in the "sixties" (1860 s).

"Uncle Dick Huffmaster used to stay at our house, and we did his washing for him. Once when I was just a strip of a girl, he bought a pair of homespun and knitted socks and paid twenty-five cents for them. I think it was the very first time they were in the wash that I placed the heels together on the battling bench and just simply cut the threads all to peices with the battling stick. You know you couldn't beat too hard on them. My! but I remember Uncle Dick sure did give that woman a "bemeanin' " for using such sorry thread in the heels of his socks. He said, 'They never last no time', and I knew all the time that I had battled them to pieces!"

This story was added to by Mag Phillips[2], sister of the contributor just quoted: "Mother made her first washboard by taking some hickory sprouts or limbs, splitting them, then removing the bark and tacking them on a short plank. This formed ridges much the same as those in the washboards of today. Later, Uncle Dick made washboards from walnut and other hardwood boards that he grooved out with a chisel or some other sharp instrument which he made on purpose for that kind of work."

Hand-Power Washing Machine

Perhaps the next step in the development of the laundry craft was the use of a little hand-power washing machine, one of which at this date is still owned by Mrs. Matt Howard of Morrow. This is a sort of wringer-fashioned machine having five rollers instead of two. The rollers are grooved much the same as is a washboard. There are four small rollers, two of which turn the same way and two the opposite of the large one, which is just above the four small ones. These rollers are so arranged that they revolve by the process of turning a handle. The machine was bolted to the old-fashioned half-barrel wooden tub and the clothes were put through it much in the same manner as they are put through a wringer today.

In spite of these hand-powered processes, to make sure that the clothes were clean, the women boiled them in a large, old kettle, which was placed out in the open some place - either about the yard or near the spring. Starch for starching the clothes was usually made from flour.

The cleaning process being solved, the next one was the ironing, which was not done by steam presses, nor electrically heated mangles, nor hot-point irons - instruments we use today. The old-fashioned smoothing iron with handle attached was used, and this was heated in the open fireplace.

Old Days Best

"In spite of the difficulties, we had a better time and enjoyed life more than folks do today (1929)," was the remark made by many persons with whom the writer had personal contact talks.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Mrs. Matt Howard of Morrow, Arkansas. Age 72 years (in 1929). A resident of Washington County since ca 1857.
2. Miss Mag Phillips of Springdale, Arkansas. A resident of Washington County since 1865.

(Editor's note: The above article is an excerpt from Mrs. Musgrave's 1929 M.A. thesis entitled *A Study of the Home and Local Crafts of the Pioneers of Washington County, Arkansas.* — RGF)

OLD PEOPLE OF ELM SPRINGS TOWNSHIP

Washington County, Arkansas

1887

(Editor's note: This list was compiled by W.H. Holcomb and published in the *Springdale News* on July 16, 1887. Dorothy (Ware) Wilson of Fayetteville copied the information from microfilm on file at the Springdale Public Library. —RGF)

ASHWORTH, Andrew; age 76, b 11 Oct 1810.

BOWMAN, B.W.; age 79, b 27 Mar 1808.

BOWMAN, Nancy; age 71.

ESSICK, Sarah; age 77, b Sep 1809.

GIBSON, Bethel; age 76, b 27 Feb 1811.

GOODRICH, Malinda; age 73, b 20 Apr 1814.

GOODRICH, Norman F.; age 76, b 26 Jun 1811.

GUNTERMAN, Silas; age 81, b 29 Apr 1806.

GUTHRIE, Lawson; age 70.

HENBRY, Benjamin; age 77, b 2 Apr 1810.

HERN, Elizabeth; age 72, b 15 Oct 1815.

HERN, W.L.; age 72, b 3 Nov 1814.

HUNT, John; age 70, b 20 Jan 1817.

IVY, Lida; age 75, b 18 Feb 1812.

JACK, Abraham; age 81, b 11 Feb 1806.

McCOY, J.H.; age 73, b 20 Jan 1814.

McCUTCHEN, Martha E.; age 78, b 28 Mar 1809.

MITCHELL, Richard; age 73, b 8 Feb 1814.

MITCHELL, Syntha; age 73, b 26 Feb 1814.

MOORE, Mrs.; age 72.

REAVES, Nancy H.; age 94, b 9 Jan 1793.

RITTER, James; age 70, b 6 Jan 1817.

SAUNDERS, Kilbrey; age 76, b 7 Aug 1810.

SUTTLE, Rebecca; age 73, b 15 Sep 1814.

SUTTLE, S.I.; age 77, b 6 Jul 1810.

TAYLOR, Alfred; age 78, b 4 July 1809.

TAYLOR, Matilda; age 72, b 21 Mar 1815.

THOMPSON, Leonard; age 81, b 26 Dec 1806.

WEBSTER, Margaret S.; age 77, b 12 Oct 1809.

WHITE, Lucinda; age 72, b 14 Apr 1815.

(Editor's note: The following is a typical Washington County indenture agreement of the mid 19th century. In this 21 Jan 1856 document, three year old Riley W. Sawyers is indentured to John H. Goodman by his guardian, Aaron A. Marrs. The original record can be found on page 248 of a WCHS County Records Library book entitled *Record of Official Bonds, Book B.* — RGF)

RILEY W. SAWYERS

Indentured Apprentice

This indenture made this 21st day of January, 1856 between Aaron A. Marrs as guardian ad litem of Riley W. Sawyers, a minor about the age of three years of the first part, and John H. Goodman of the second part witnesseth.

that the said party of the first part (A.A. Marrs) doth by virtue of an order of the Probate Court of Washington County, made at the January term thereof A.D. 1856, put, place and bind out the said Riley W. Sawyers to the said party of the second part (J.H. Goodman) who is by occupation a farmer, and with him, the party of the second part (J.H. Goodman), after the manner of an apprentice to dwell and live until the said Riley W. Sawyers arrive(s) at the age of twenty-one years, during which time the said Riley W. (Sawyers) is to well and faithfully serve the party of the second part (J.H. Goodman) and to him give and devote his time and labor.

And the said party of the second part (J.H. Goodman) for himself, his heirs, executors and administrators, doth covenant to and with the said party of the first part (A.A. Marrs) as such guardian that he will faithfully instruct the said Riley W. Sawyers in the art and occupation of a farmer so far as he, the said Riley W. (Sawyers) shall show himself capable of learning the same,

that he (Goodman) will during the time aforesaid supply the said Riley W. (Sawyers) with good and sufficient food, lodging and clothing and all other things necessary, in sickness and in health,

and to educate the said Riley W. Sawyers to spell, read and cipher the single rule of three inclusive, and to give the said Riley W. (Sawyers) a genteel suit of Sunday clothing and a good horse, saddle and bridle when he shall arrive at the age of twenty-one years, and that so far as in him lies, he (Goodman) will instruct the said Riley W. (Sawyers) in the habits of temperance, virtue and morality.

In witness whereof, we the parties of the first and second parts have hereunto set our hands and seals this 21st day (of) January, A.D. 1856.

Aaron A. Marrs
Guardian Ad Litem
John H. Goodman

Filed 25th January, 1856 and recorded 24th March, 1856.

Presly R. Smith, Clerk
and Ex Officio Recorder

Gregg House, Fayetteville. (WCHS photo collection)

Walker/Knerr House, Fayetteville. (WCHS photo by Michael Donat)

THE GOLDEN AGE OF BRICK

in Washington County

by Robert D. Besom

Brick is a very old building material which is rather simple to produce. The basic ingredients, clay, labor, and heat, are readily available. Scholars are in agreement that man has been molding and burning clay to make bricks for at least 5,000 years.

Brick making tends to be a localized activity. Because the finished product is so awkward and heavy and the ingredients so common, it has been more economical to produce brick near a building site than to transport it from afar. Even today, when the brick industry is often gigantic, even international in scale, production is decentralized.

Suitable Clay Required

For thousands of years, the basic steps involved in brick making changed little. First, clay had to be dug and prepared. (In Washington County, nineteenth century settlers found an abundance of suitable clay close to the surface. Good brick clay is particularly common in the plains and came from the decomposition of nearby sandstone and shale hills).

Until the latter third of the nineteenth century, molding of clay into brick shapes was almost entirely hand work. The brick molder pushed a lump of clay fully into a mold which had no top nor bottom and was slightly larger than the desired brick size to allow for shrinkage. The molder struck off the excess clay and emptied the wet brick onto a pallet. The green bricks were set aside for several weeks to dry.

Clamps and Kilns

The bricks were burned either in clamps or kilns. Certainly the earliest brick, perhaps all that was made in Washington County until after the Civil War, was burned in clamps. In effect, clamps were green bricks which were carefully arranged in order to form their own oven or kiln. Fuel (coal or wood) was placed in corbeled openings at the bottom of the clamp and air spaces among the green bricks allowed for air and heat to circulate throughout the pile. Once constructed, the clamp was plastered over with mud and fired. The burning process took weeks. The bricks closest to the fire naturally burned the hottest and therefore became harder and darker than the outer layers. This accounts for some of the lack of uniformity obvious in early bricks.

Once the bricks cooled they were separated according to quality and color, the best bricks, for example, set aside to be used as exterior or facing bricks.

Early Brick Construction

The first brick construction in Washington County probably took place in Cane Hill, a town which had its beginnings even before 1828 when the county officially opened to white settlement. Conrad Russell, who lives in Cane Hill and has a passion for its history, says the brick Methodist manse, still standing on the main road through town, was built in 1834. Rev. Andrew Buchanan, a Cumberland Presbyterian minister who survives in countless stories about the area, supervised the construction. Russell has found evidence that even earlier than the manse, a two-room brick school house was built on the hill east of town. He speculates that it was built in 1832. It was destroyed long ago. (Russell believes that Cane Hill College was organized in that schoolhouse in 1834.)

Some time ago, local boys playing along the bluffs on the east side of town discovered what was later identified as an early brick clamp or kiln. The boys alerted Russell, who lives nearby, and in exploring the site he found many old bricks. This was apparently the site where the bricks for the manse and school were fired for there was no other known brick construction (except for chimneys) in the area until construction of the Cane Hill College Building in 1886. Its bricks were made on the college campus.

Cane Hill Building Typical

The two early Cane Hill buildings are typical of other brick construction in the county, at least until the years following the Civil War. The brick was made close to the site in quantities limited specifically to the immediate needs. The operation was small and personal in scale. The only name that survives is that of some well-known personality associated with the project, the supervisor or owner. It is probably that the same people who made the bricks also laid them.

There is evidence that some of the brick masons were skilled black slaves. The construction of the two-story Routh-Bailey House on Old Wire Road on the east side of Fayetteville provides an example. According to A.G. Routh of Hindsville in an undated *Northwest Arkansas Times* article (found in the Otto Earnest Rayburn Collection, Special Collections, the University of Arkansas Library, and probably from the 1940s), the building was constructed in 1848-1850 entirely by slaves. The slaves, twenty in number, were owned by A.G.'s grandfather, Benjamin Routh. The slaves dug the clay on the farm, and then molded and burned it. They also burned the limestone to make mortar and laid the brick.

Brick Masons in Census

Some of the buildings constructed before the Civil War were undoubtedly the work of contractors who lived on the site and performed or oversaw every stage of the work. A few contractors can be identified by name from census records for Washington County. The earliest census records (the 1829 and 1865 special sheriff's censuses and the regular 1830 and 1840 U.S. Censuses) do not indicate occupations, but the 1850 U.S. Census lists two men, both immigrants from Great Britain, who may have been contractors. One, Charles Brading, 28 years old, was listed as a "mason", a label which was often applied to people who made as well as laid bricks, as well as to people who worked with stone. Brading's home was in Cane Hill township. The second man was Robert Seymour, 38, a "bricklayer" in Clear Creek township. According to Bobbie Lynch, the Springdale historian, Seymour built himself a brick home in the 1850s near the old Shiloh Church in what is now Springdale. That house stood until the 1940s. One of his Arkansas-born children was seven years old in 1850 and a Robert Seymore, a 55-year-old "Brick Mason", turned up in the Elm Springs Township census of 1870. So, Seymour or Seymore may have practiced his art in Washington County for 27 years or more. (Such stability among early practitioners was unusual, or so it seems. Of the 48 men identified with the trade in census records, periodicals, and business directories between 1850 and 1904, only nine make more than a fleeting appearance and most of those nine owned late nineteenth century brickyards.)

Three brick masons were listed in the 1860 U.S. Census:

BARNES, Wesley, 58, Prairie Township
BARNES, Wiley, 30, White River Township
SLATER, Miland, 29, Cane Hill Township

Wesley Barnes may have settled in at Prairie Township, which included Fayetteville, as there was plenty of brick work to be done in that area. But Wiley Barnes and Miland Stater appear in two unlikely spots for brick men. There was very little nineteenth century brick construction in either Cane Hill or White River Townships. Perhaps these men had farms in one place and traveled elsewhere to do contract work. Or they may have made brick for chimneys, wells, sidewalks, or to wall in graves. Or perhaps the census enumerator happened to catch them camped out with their families (or at least their children as neither had a wife listed) at the site of one of their contracts. For example, there were at least two nineteenth century brick houses built where Barnes was found, in the wilds of White River Township. Both for members of the same family. The once-magnificent Ben Johnson house is still a private residence on Black

Oak road. But its date of construction is almost certain to be 1877, not 1860. An earlier house was built for George Lewis near what became Carter Post Office in the southern part of the township. It was a one-story ell-shaped house which is still occupied. It is said, by M.J. Johnson of Johnson, grandson of Ben Johnson and great-grandson of George Lewis, to have been built around 1850, but perhaps Barnes was asked to add to it ten years later.

Post Civil War Period

The Civil War reconstruction period was the Golden Age of brick architecture in Washington County. The structures built between 1867 and 1880 are dazzling. The list includes some of the great architectural gems of the Arkansas Ozarks:

Maguire Store, 1867
Nathan Combs House, 1868-1870
Lake-Bell House, 1868-1871
Benjamin Pegram House, 1869
Gregg House, 1869
Lotspeich-Mullins House, 1866
Buchanan-Bagley House, 1869
Wash. County Courthouse, 1869, torn down ca 1904
National Cem. Caretaker House, 1870
Stokenbury House, 1870
Vest-McEnany House, 1870
Shiloh Bapt. College, Springdale, 1871, torn down 1910
Methodist Episcopal Church, Fayetteville, 1872, torn down ca 1904
Walker-Knerr House, 1872-1878
Old Main, U of A campus, 1873-1879
National Cemetery Wall, 1874
Ben Johnson House, 1877
J.Q. Johnson House, 1879
Stone-Hilton House, 1879
E.T. Caudle House, 1880

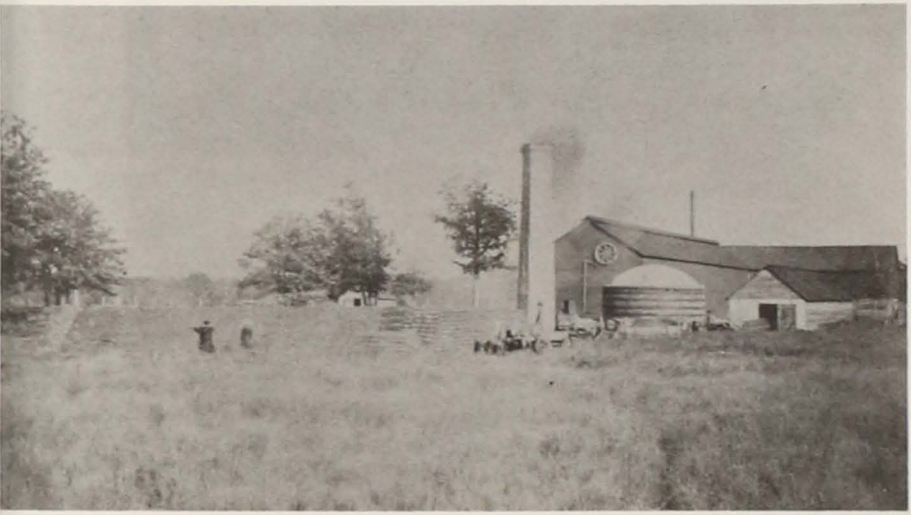
Most of these buildings as far as is known, were constructed of brick fired in kilns at various brickyards and not in clamps on building sites. (Exceptions are the Stokenberry House in Elkins, the two Johnson Houses, and the Pegram House, all of which, according to oral tradition, were built of brick which was made and fired on the site.) This is an indication of a shift underway, a shift from production that was personal and particular to mass production wherein teams of men labored at a brickyard to produce a product which in turn was supplied to various contractors who actually constructed the buildings.

What accounts for the concentration of brick construction after the Civil War? Prairie Grove, and especially Fayetteville, were the scenes of bitter battles and widespread destruction. The rest of the county faced constant struggles with troops from both sides and with bushwackers. A lot of buildings were destroyed in the process. Reconstruction meant that many people and institutions had to rebuild. Those who stayed in the county during the war were haunted by the image of flaming wooden buildings. As has often been the case after a mass of frame structures fell in fires, those faced with rebuilding turned to fire-resistant brick whenever possible.

Production Technology Improves

In addition, the technology for rapid, high-volume, inexpensive production of bricks was developed. By the 1870s brick making machines were widely available. J.H. Renick of New York City advertised the "Franklin Brick Machine" in the *Fayetteville Weekly Democrat* of April 10, 1869. He offered to test on any purchaser's brickyard his claim that with eight men and two horses, the machine would produce 2,500 to 3,500 "elegant" bricks per hour. It could produce up to 5,000 bricks per hour when powered by steam. A year later, H. G. Boyd, who presumably purchased some such machine, was prepared to sell bricks from his yard one mile east of Fayetteville at a reasonable $6.00 per 1,000.

Terpening Brick & Tile Company, Walnut Grove area. The factory, which was located between Farmington and Prairie Grove on Highway 170, closed on the eve of World War I. **(WCHS photo collection)**



Perhaps, too, the attraction to brick related to its symbolic quality. Brick suggests solidity. Brick construction means strength, stability, and permanency, something one can rely upon. People shocked by the war were looking for something to lean on and at the same time a way to express their faith in the notion that things were getting better.

Not surprisingly, there was a sharp increase in the number of brick masons in that period over earlier years. While two men were listed in the 1850 U.S. Census and three in 1860, there were 14 included in 1870 and eight in 1880. From all sources, some 25 individuals have been identified as brick masons or brick makers at some time during the Golden Age. All but five of them lived in Fayetteville. Only two of the 25, John H. Kelton of Fayetteville and Edwin T. Caudle of Springdale, settled down in their respective towns. Each of these operated a famous and prosperous brickyard into the twentieth century.

Fayetteville Brick Masons

In the following list of Fayetteville "brick masons", those known to have produced bricks are indicated with an asterisk and the four that appeared in the 1880 U.S. Census for the first time are so indicated:

AVERY, James, 24
*BARKER and STEVENSON
BARNES, Jason, 35 (in Elm Springs in 1880 census)
*BOYD, H.G., 40
(CARSTEL?), 32
CROUCH, Livi, 57
DRISKILL, William S., 55 (1880 Census)
*GLASS, H.L.
HALE, Alvin B., 39 (1880 Census)
*HUNT, Thomas J.
(KELLON?), S.C., 36
*KELTON, John, 35
McCELLAND, C., 49
MURRAY, Michael, 35
*REED and WRIGHT
*SAGER, Jacob N., 36
STAGGS, F.A., 46
*VEST, John S., 35
WILLHOITE, Francis M., 33 (1880 Census)
YOUNG, (Landon) A., 51 (1880 Census)

Of the three masons listed in the 1870 U.S. Census outside of Fayetteville, W.R. Barnes, 32, lived in Boonesboro (Cane Hill), Milo Slaughter, 41, lived in Rhea's Mill, and, as mentioned, Caudle, 31, lived in Springdale. Andrew Walker, 25, appears in the 1880 census at Elm Springs.

Late Nineteenth Century Bricks

Perhaps the individual buildings were less spectacular than earlier, but the pace of brick construction increased in the 1880s, 1890s, and the early twentieth century. Prairie Grove began its love affair with brick. The Fayetteville Square converted almost entirely from frame to brick. Springdale spread out along Emma Avenue with new brick businesses, much to the delight of Edwin Caudle who prospered. Various congregations built fine new brick churches. Two of the most impressive that have survived were the Episcopal Church in Fayetteville and the Walnut Grove Presbyterian Church.

Walnut Grove Presbyterian Church. (WCHS photo collection)

Terpening Brick & Tile Company

The Walnut Grove Church is a monument to the longest-lived brick works in the county, the Terpening Brick and Tile Company located about halfway between Prairie Grove and Farmington. With its up-to-date technology, the Terpening works represented a last stage of Washington County brick production. There have not been any known bricks produced in the county since it closed on the eve of World War I.

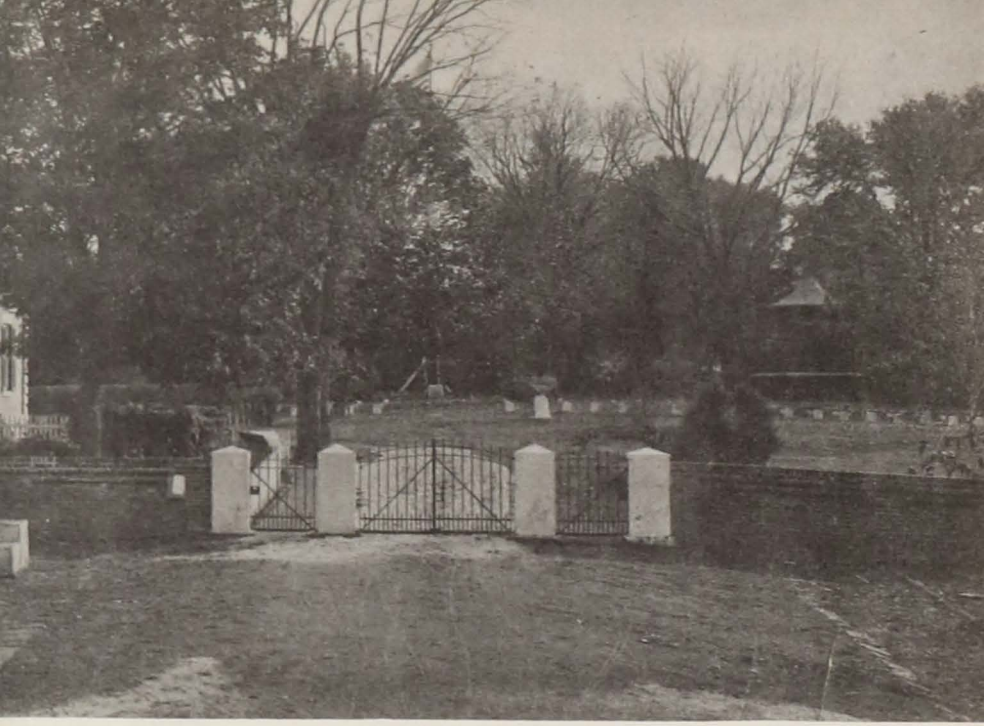
National Cemetery, Fayetteville. Brick wall and caretaker's house. (WCHS photo collection)

In 1884, Cornelius Terpening, a farmer in Danville, Illinois, bought land in the Walnut Grove area and decided to move his family to the more agreeable climate of Northwest Arkansas. In the late 1880s, Cornelius divided the land among his four children. Two of the children, George and Frank, decided in about 1890 to supplement their farm income by using the rich bottomland clay they found near the surface of their land to make brick and tile. (Drainage of lowlands was a major concern of farmers trying to raise crops in wet valleys and one method of drainage involved burying special four-inch tile pipe such as the Terpenings made. According to one source, the Terpening tile sold better than their brick.)

The operation is remembered by Herbert Terpening, one of George's children who now lives in Farmington. Herbert worked at the plant as a child.

Large Pond Remains

The clay, dug on the Terpening property (a large pond still remains where most of it was dug), was mixed and molded by a steam-driven machine. The green bricks were placed in a large drying shed. An



elevator was used to get the bricks to the upper portion of the shed. The exhaust from the steam engine was pumped into the shed in order to quicken the drying process. There were two large wood and coal fired kilns, a rectangular one for the bricks and a round one for the tile.

The Terpening Company hired five men to supplement the family labor force in the factory. One worker fed clay into the mill; another cut the continuous ribbon of clay into bricks that were extruded from the machine. Various other tasks associated with the operation were divided up: digging clay, unloading the green bricks from the conveyer belt, loading and unloading kilns, preparing brick for shipment, and so on.

The Terpening Switch

The brick company built three small frame houses for the workers. Most of the brick and tile left the factory by rail, a good deal of it destined for Indian Territory. The Oklahoma, Central and Cherokee Railroad, running from Fayetteville to Muskogee, passed nearby and "Terpening Switch" gave the factory access to the line.

The distinctive Terpening bricks are identifiable on several Prairie Grove buildings, including the First Methodist Church (1903) on Neal Street, and the Southern Mercantile and Carl commercial buildings downtown.

The Terpenings not only supplied the brick, but also much of the labor for the Walnut Grove Presbyterian Church, dedicated in 1903. George Terpening and Nathan Hanks, the minister, laid the bricks. Other members of the congregation did the woodwork and built the pews. Contemporary members of the church are still proud of the effort and are quick to point out that everything but the windows was made by members of the congregation and that the materials came from within a mile of the building site.

Brickyards Prevail

By the late nineteenth century, it is likely that few bricks were made in the county outside of brickyards. Although the Victorians were fond of the more precise, regular lines provided by machine-made bricks, there were still many hand-molded bricks being made at the turn of the century. Caudle in Springdale, for example, appears never to have converted to brick machines. (In order to impose some uniformity, it was common to paint a brick structure a solid red color and then to paint precisely-ruled white mortar lines on top of the red, sometimes without regard to the location of the actual mortar.) During this period, the term brick mason probably took on its more narrow, modern meaning of bricklayer.

F.A. Terpening residence, Farmington, 1913. (WCHS photo collection)

S.H. Blackmere was a brick manufacturer in Fayetteville from ca 1884 to 1906. In partnership during the early period with S. Hale, his brickyard sat at the end of Hill Street at the southern edge of town. Another company, and two individuals, appeared in the 1904 *Fayetteville Business Directory* as brick manufacturers: Willard Algire, Algire and Pilkin, and William Fitz. Twelve brick masons are listed in the directory, including a black man, W.T. Fry.

Railroad Brings Competition

After the completion of the Frisco Railroad in 1882, the Washington County brick industry was faced with outside competition. Fort Smith and the Missouri towns of Springfield and Joplin had substantial, high-volume factories ready to enter the market. (Gravette in Benton County also had a factory, ca 1895-1908.)

After the World War I era, brick poured into the county by rail and the local industry was shut down altogether. The Acme Brick Company has become the almost exclusive supplier of bricks for Washington County. Acme is a Texas-based company that gobbled up so many small firms, including those in Fort Smith, since its origins in 1891 that it is now the largest manufacturer of bricks in the United States.

Special Meaning

Bricks hold a very special meaning for people. Not only do they mean durability, dependability, solidity, and fire resistance, but they also have warm, intangible qualities. People have commonly referred to brick building with which they were associated in friendly, affectionate terms. The Vest-McEnany House, the Methodist Episcopal Church on West Center in Fayetteville, and the Routh-Bailey House were simply referred to as "The Brick" by their friends. The fact that so many of the structures have survived to enrich the built environment of Washington County today is indicative of the respect succeeding generations have had for the buildings and is a tribute to the anonymous nineteenth century architects.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

Most of the sources for this study have been noted in the narrative. Nominations for the National Register of Historic Places have been consulted as well as different reports of John C. Branner on clay in the Arkansas Geological Survey, 1888, 1908. Two fine, readable secondary works that deal with all aspects of the brick trade are: Harley J. McKee, *Introduction to Early American Masonry: Stone, Brick, Mortar and Plaster* (National Trust for Historic Preservation and Columbia University, 1973), and John Woodforde, *Bricks to Build a House* (London, 1976).

Know all Men by These presents That we E A=
Buck and David M Webster in Consideration of
The Sum of Five hundred Dollars in Money
property and Labor heretofore advanced To
us by David Walker have This day granted
bargained and sold and do hereby transfer
and deliver to The said Walker all The Brick
and Brick Kiln upon our Brick yard
adjoining The Town of Fayetteville Arkansas
in Washington County to have and to hold
The same to The said Walker until his The said
Walkers house, (to build which said Brick
was made) and The other Brick work Contracted
to be done, Shall be Completed and finished
And until The said Walker Shall be fully paid
indemnified and secured in The advancements made
and to be made as aforesaid and we do hereby
give and grant and Contract with The said
Walker That he is to have and retain a lien upon
The said Bricks and Brick Kiln until The time
aforsaid Then This instrument to be null and
void Given under our hands and seals This
The first October 1846

E A Buck (Seal)
D M Webster (Seal)

Miscellaneous Record. This 1 Oct 1846 document is from page 118 of *Miscellaneous Records*. The bricks Judge David Walker purchased from Buck and Webster were used in the construction of what is now known as the Walker/Stone house on West Center Street, Fayetteville. This record provided researchers with valuable evidence as to the age of the recently restored structure.

MISCELLANEOUS RECORDS INDEX

Washington County, Arkansas

1840 - 1878

(Editor's note: Several of our members had suggested that the Society publish some of Washington County's miscellaneous records in *Flashback*. To this end, we are publishing the complete index to *Miscellaneous Records* for the years 1840 through 1878. The majority of the records contained in the original leather-bound volume are from the 1840s and 1850s. A few were drafted in the 1830s, but not recorded until after 1840.

All dates listed in the following transcription were added by the editor. The tediousness of having to read each document to find its date of record was relieved when the editor unexpectedly found many pages of material which had never been indexed. These newly indexed items are identified herein by an asterisk (*) following the page reference number.

Photostatic copies of the original records referred to in this index can be obtained from the County Clerk, Washington County Courthouse, Fayetteville, AR 72701. Be sure to enclose a SASE when writing to the County Clerk for prices. — RGF)

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The old Carnahan Mill at Cane Hill encased in ice. (WCHS photo collection)

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UNITED BRETHREN, Fayetteville - articles of association, 16 Feb 1875, p.261.

VANWINKLE, Peter - apprentice agreement, 1842, pp.34 & 35.
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WALLACE, W.S. to A. WALLACE - Negro man, bill of sale, 16 Jun 1840, p.24.
WALLACE, W.S. to Willis WALLACE - Negro boy, bill of sale, 2 Aug 1842, p.70.
WATSON, Joseph S. - revocation of power of atty, 18 Oct 1855, p.206.
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WEATHERLY, Noah & wife to James E. MAYFIELD - 1844, p. 64.
WEATHERLY, W. - dower, 19 Aug 1845, p.81.
WHITE, Bryant W. - family record, p.255.
WHITE, William G. - miller, 25 May 1860, p.231.
WHYTE, James to Richard PHELAN - deed to personal property: crop, stock & wagon, 30 Nov 1841, p.31.
WILBANKS, William to John HOLCOMB - bill of sale, 22 Feb 1860, p.229.*
WILEY, Henrietta - dowry, p.256.*
WILLIAMS, Elijah - power of atty, 23 Sep 1834, p.161.
WILSON, Sarah W. - schedule of real estate & other property, 11 Nov 1847, pp.127-130.
WINN, James - deputy sheriff, 20 Jul 1867, p.250.*
WOOLSEY, Mathias - indenture, 19 Apr 1848, p.153.

THE OMOHUNDRO FAMILY

By Eva Sue Omohundro

The year — 1670. The place — Westmoreland County, Virginia. The record — a deed. And thus it is that the first traceable recording of the name Omohundro is found. From this man, Richard Omohundro, to whom the deed was made, descended the first Omohundro to settle in Washington County, Arkansas, about two hundred years later.

Richard Omohundro

Richard Omohundro of Westmoreland County was a farmer. There is no record of where or when he was born, or of how or why he came to Virginia. He lived among the English colonists and his neighbors are well known, the Washingtons, Taylors, Lees, and Tylers. These people were witnesses to Richard's written documents. Richard died in Virginia about 1698. He was married to Ann Moxley and to Richard and Ann were born six children, William, John, Elizabeth, Richard, Thomas and Ann. Thomas is the ancestor of the great Southern branch of the Omohundro family. This branch spread to Missouri, Tennessee, Kentucky and to Northwest Arkansas.

James Columbus Omohundro

Millie Talla Omohundro

Thomas was born about 1686 and died about 1732. Very little else is known except that his wife's name was Jane and they had at least one child, James. James was also a farmer. He and his wife, Elizabeth, had five children. Their youngest child was William, born about 1764. At this time the family was still in Westmoreland County, Virginia. William inherited the family estate from his father. He and Mary Claxton were married on December 22, 1794 in Granville County, South Carolina. William and Mary were the parents of four sons and seven daughters. Their second son was born on February 17, 1799, probably in Campbell County, Virginia. In 1815 William acquired land in Bedford County, Tennessee. It is not known why he left the family estate and Virginia. Evidently the family moved several times.

James Y. and Albert E.

The son born to William in 1799 was James Young Omohundro. James married and settled his family near Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Ten children were born to James and his wife Lucy. After Lucy's death James remarried and resettled in Saline County, Illinois. There he died and is buried. One of his sons, Albert E., was born June 13, 1828, in Tennessee. In 1847 at the age of nineteen Albert E. enlisted in the Tennessee Infantry to fight in the Mexican War. Less than two years later he died on board a ship fifty miles out from New Orleans on July 6, 1848. He was survived by his widow, Emily Watson Omohundro, and one son, James Columbus. Albert was brought to New Orleans and buried.

James Columbus Omohundro

It was James Columbus who eventually settled in Washington County, Arkansas. James was born March 19, 1847, in Tennessee. He was reared near Nashville. On July 7, 1864, he married Millie Talla Phillips (b. April 15, 1847). James was a veteran of the Civil War, having enlisted in November, 1864. He listed his occupation as a farmer when he volunteered to serve in the United States Army. When he volunteered he was eighteen. He was listed as having blue eyes, light hair, fair complexion, and as being six feet tall.

Dutch Mills

It is not known what year or why James Columbus and his wife came to Arkansas. It is known that the family lived in Texas prior to coming to Arkansas and that at least five children were born before the move to Arkansas. James and Millie settled at Dutch Mills near Lincoln, Arkansas. He served as postmaster of Dutch Mills from April 1, 1902, to October 15, 1902. James Columbus died in Lincoln, Arkansas on February 19, 1922 and was buried in the Sugar Hill

Cemetery west of Lincoln. Millie died in May, 1929 and was also buried in the Sugar Hill Cemetery.

The children of James and Millie Omohundro were as follows: Albert E. (b. Nov. 3, 1866), Sarah K. (b. Jan. 3, 1869), Emily Addie (b. Dec. 20, 1870), Mary E. (b. Jan. 28, 1872), Alice (b. Jan. 9, 1878), Winnie (b. Aug. 23, 1880), John Sherman (b. Aug. 15, 1886), and James T. (b. Dec. 16, 1888). Four infants died yet unnamed and one daughter died in childhood. All of the surviving children lived part of their lives in or near Lincoln. Albert and his wife and Alice Omohundro Smith and her husband are buried alongside their parents in the Sugar Hill Cemetery.

SOURCE

Omohundro, Malvern Hill, *The Omohundro Genealogical Record*, c. 1953.
Information for article supplied by Mrs. S.P. Herren, Haskell, Texas.

ABBREVIATIONS

about	ca	grandparents	gpar
birth date	bdt	grandson	gson
birthplace	bpl	great	gr
born	b	great grand-	gg-
brother	bro	husband	h
buried	bur	information	info
cemetery	cem	male	M
child(ren)	ch	marriage (-ied)	m
County	Co	marriage date	mdt
date(s)	dt	married first	m/1
daughter	dau	mother	mo
death date	ddt	obituary	obit
died	d	parents	par
father	fa	self-addressed stamped envelope	SASE
family (-lies)	fam	second	2nd
female	f	sister	sis
first	1st	son (s)	s
first husband	1/h	township	twp
first wife	1/w	unknown	unk
from	fr	unmarried	unm
grand	g	wife	w
grandchild	gch	widow(er)	wid
granddaughter	gdau	year (s)	yr(s)
grandmother	gmo		

QUERIES

BAIRD (BARD), Amanda Jane - m Wm. V. DYER ca 1869, parents were James BAIRD & Rachel CLEVATE. Want to correspond with anyone having knowledge of the preceeding surnames. Mary C. Bowen, 4885 Academy St., San Diego, CA 92109.

CRAIG, James G. - b ca 1821 TN, m America SPEARS, d 1859 Wash Co, lived Marrs Hill Twp. Need bdt, ddt & burpl for James. Was America the dau of Dickson SPEARS? Jean Landers, Box 852, Holtville, CA 92250.

DUTTON, Moses - b 1816 VA of SC par, m Elizabeth LANE 13 May 1841, d 20 Jan 1897, lived Brush Creek Twp. Need father's name. John S. Butler, 1302 E. Maple, Stillwater, OK 74074.

DYER, Jackson - liv Wilson Co MO 1840, liv Pike Co MO 1850, mov Wash Co AR ca 1855, m Agnes _____, ch Nancy, Cynthia, Wm. V., Carlton, others, Need Jackson's bpl, mdt, fa (Wisner?), fabpl, gfa (Booker?) and wife's surname. Mary C. Bowen, 4885 Academy St., San Diego, CA 92109.

FIDLER, T.J. - b 5 Mar 1827, d 18 Nov 1879, m 19 Aug 1855 to America R. SIMMONS b 20 Oct 1836, ch incl Samuel, Thomas & Amelia Elen. Need bpl, mpl & dpl for T.J. FIDLER. Thomas E. Williams, SRB, Box 7470, Palmer, AK 99645.

GENTRY, Nancy - b 1802 Davidson Co TN, m James LITTLE ca 1822, em Wash Co AR ca 1830 from Clarke Co AR, d 1840. Need parents for Nancy. Mrs. Evlyn Broumley, 320 W. Josephine, Weatherford TX 76086.

LAWRENCE, George - b ca 1772 NC, d ca 1852 Wash Co AR, arrive Wash Co ca 1829, liv Prairie Grove. His son James d 1836. Need George's mdt, mpl, burpl & wife's surname. Marjorie M. Wampnar, 7164 E. 53rd Pl., Tulsa, OK 74145.

LOFTON, John Stephen - b 1826, d 1875, w Rachel _____, s John D. LOFTON b ca 1853 AR. Need Rachel's surname. She may have been of Indian descent. Hercel Loston, 722 N. Oak, Kermit, TX 79745.

NEWTON, Naomi - head of household 1830 cen Wash Co AR which also lists 2 girls & 1 boy. The boy is my ggfa Asa Richardson NEWTON. Need any info on Naomi. Earl F. Arnett, 4363 Olenfaugy Blvd., Columbus, OH 43214.

PITTMAN, Samuel - Arrived Ark Terr 1827 & settled near Cane Hill & Prairie Grove (Campbell farm). Ch Rachel b ca 1805 NC, Wincy b ca 1806 NC, Nancy b ca 1808 NC, James C. b ca 1811 NC. Need ddt & burpl for Samuel. Ruth J. Dick, 321 Willow St., Ottawa, KS 66067.

RAMSEY, William - b ca 1810 TN, w Elizabeth b ca 1812 NC, ch Joel b ca 1835 TN, Jane b ca 1842 TN, Samuel b ca 1844 TN, Aaron b ca 1848 TN, Catherine b ca 1951 IL. Need bdt, bpl, ddt, burpl, etc for William. Was 1/w named Elsie SANDERS? Mrs. Bill Terneus, 230 17th St. SE, Pryor, OK 74361.

STEERE, Simon Bolivar - Fayetteville dentist ca 1887, w Margaret Susan WELLS, ch Victoria STEERE fr Greene Co IL m 3 Dec 1882 in Fayetteville to Wm. Robt. SKELTON, s/law Geo. W. BALDRIDGE m 30 Aug 1866 to Simon's dau Maggie in Fayetteville. Want to know if Steere family had property in Fayetteville. Mildred Dayton Lawrence, 11757 3rd Pl. NW, Seattle, WA 98177.

THOMAS, William Henry - b 5 Nov 1823 _____? Co TN, w/1 Sarah Rebecca FOUST, w/2 Catherine WINSTEAD, Wm. d 31 Mar 1908 Viney Grove. Need bpl & par. Jean Rehtus, 1575 S. Marshall St., Lakewood, CO 80226.

WHITAKER, William R., Sr. - b 24 Feb 1824 Buncombe Co NC, m Jane Elizabeth Hasseltine PACE 21 Feb 1846 Cherokee Co NC, d 13 June 1907 Dutch Mills Wash Co AR. Wm. em Wash Co from GA ca 1870. Where did Wm. live in GA? Ruth T. Whitaker, 2360 Londonderry, Ann Arbor, MI 48104.

WHITE, Sloman (Slowman) - b Oct 1826 TN, w Mathilda Caroline EARP, both probably buried Ganderville Cem, listed Wash Co cen 1880 & 1900, had twin bro Soloman WHITE. Need par for Sloman, ddts Sloman & wife, & any info re bro Soloman. Indian blood? Beverly Blunt, 5269 Camden Ave., No. 169, San Jose, CA 95124.

TEXTILE DEVELOPMENT

by Bonita Musgrave

No doubt the development of the textile industry has been one of the greatest factors in promoting civilization. There is much to be said regarding the manufacture of cloth and necessary articles of clothing among those who were citizens of our country in the early days. Until long after Washington County was settled, woman held the textile industry in her hand. She was, as a rule, the original inventor and workman. Her whole time and efforts were given to improving the conditions of the home. Clothing is an essential to comfortable living.

No doubt, domestic duties were increased for the pioneer housewife, since many of the Southern and Eastern homes had contained slaves. Those settlers who were fortunate enough to bring slaves with them needed the labor of these black folks on the farm, in opening up land and in the production of the necessary food supply, thereby reserving few as servants or maids to help in the house.

Flax, Cotton and Wool

Before cloth could be made, the raw products had to be provided. These, as a rule, were supplied by the growing of flax and cotton, and the raising of sheep. All of these industries were common in this section seventy-five years ago (ca 1850).

GOODSPEED HISTORY FOR SALE

The Washington County Historical Society is offering for sale limited edition reproductions of the Goodspeed Publishing Company's *History of Washington County, Arkansas.* This detailed history of the county was originally published in 1889 as a section in Goodspeed's seven county history of Northwest Arkansas.

The 6" x 8", 350 page softback book traces the history of the county from the Louisiana Purchase to 1888. Hundreds of names, events and places are mentioned in the narrative history. In addition, approximately 200 pioneer family histories are included in the biographical section. A surname index is also included.

The price of Goodspeed's *History of Washington County, Arkansas* is $8.50 per copy, postpaid. Make your check payable to Washington County Historical Society.

Cloth making was a long process, as all processes involved in the manufacture were done by hand. Each process in the making of cloth was the result of the development of certain handicrafts carried out as a result of thrift practices for home betterment.

Dew-rotting

The first step after production of the raw material was its preparation for use. It is difficult to say which of the three main fibers employed the least effort, because much time was spent on each of them. Time and patience was demanded in the preparation of all materials. The flax, after being cut and tied in bundles, must later be scattered out on the grass to undergo a process of "dew-rotting" in order to break down the woody covering of the stalk. This usually took place some time in September and the stalks were left scattered over the grass for three or four weeks. Then, it was gathered up and put through several processes before the fibers were ready to be spun into threads. After rotting, the next step was breaking. After the breaking came the hackling. Both were done on handmade devices which were the result of intellectual as well as physical power. Flax fibers were never carded, but were ready for spinning after much work pulling them through the hackle or comb. This hackle was made by fastening many small iron spindles very firmly into a board or heavy block of wood. The fibers were drawn through these sharpened spindles much in the manner of combing.

The preparation of wool required fully as much time as did that of flax, because wool had to be shorn from the sheep, burred, washed, and broken before the final carding into rolls could be done.

Finger Picking the Cotton

Cotton, after being gathered from the plants in the fields, must be separated from the seeds. This separation was difficult and tedious. Since Northwest Arkansas was not adapted to the growing of cotton on a large scale, there were no cotton gins available to separate the fibers from the seeds. At first, the fibers were picked from the seeds by hand. This process was known as "finger picking" and was a very slow one. Quoting from at least two women[1] who have lived through the period of the "finger picking" of cotton, the following is evidence of how diligently those housewives worked at their trade. "We usually finger picked the cotton (separating the lint from seeds) after supper was over and the younger children had been put to bed. The older members of the family helped and, as a rule, enough cotton was separated in one night to keep the mother busy carding and spinning the next day; or else enough to pad a quilt, depending upon which of these articles was most needed."

A great help to the housewife along the development of ginning was the invention and making of hand-power cotton gins. Many of the early pioneersmen made these very necessary machines. One of these gins within the county still extant and often used may be seen at the home of Mrs. Will Houston referred to above. The process is carried on by two persons operating the simple, hand made device which consists of two smooth round steel rods fastened very close together with a crank on the opposite end of each. In operating this gin two persons sit facing each other, each turning a crank. One feeds cotton; the other removes lint. The seeds drop down.

Carding

For the production of cloth, both the cotton and the wool fibers had to be carded into rolls. Carding by hand was difficult and required much skill in the use of the hands to keep the process going continuously for several hours. This was a common occupation at night before bed time. Not all women could card wool and cotton into rolls; therefore those who developed the art of so doing were kept quite busy, thus sharing with others a skill which enabled all to be more comfortable.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Mrs. Will Houston of Clyde, Arkansas, a resident of Washington County for 68 years (since ca 1861) and Mrs. Margaret Harriet Patterson of Lincoln, Arkansas, a resident of the county since 1854.

(Editor's note: The above article is an excerpt from Mrs. Musgrave's 1929 M.A. thesis entitled *A Study of the Home and Local Crafts of the Pioneers of Washington County, Arkansas.* — RGF)

NOTE TO MEMBERS

The editor encourages members to submit historical material about Washington County and its people for publication in *Flashback.* All manuscripts should be typed (double spaced) and carefully proofread by the author prior to submission. Special consideration will be given to footnoted manuscripts which are less than 2000 words in length and are accompanied by old photographs or other illustrative material.